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17 December 1960

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Somali Republic - Communist China: Prime Minister Abdirascid announced in the Somali parliament on 14 December that his government had decided to recognize Communist China and exchange diplomatic representatives. The decision, the result of an assiduous campaign by Peiping in competition with Nationalist China, reportedly was made following a recent conversation between Abdirascid and the Chinese Communist ambassador in Cairo. An official Chinese delegation reportedly is to visit Mogadiscio in the near future.

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Iran: [The Shah of Iran] hopes to begin parliamentary elections within the next ten days. He plans to allow voters a choice between at least two contenders for each seat and he will personally select the candidates. The Shah intends to order local authorities not to manipulate the voting on behalf of their favorites. It is unlikely that such an order would be followed. Public knowledge of the wholesale rigging of last August's elections forced the Shah to suspend them. A new electoral fiasco could cause public disturbances.

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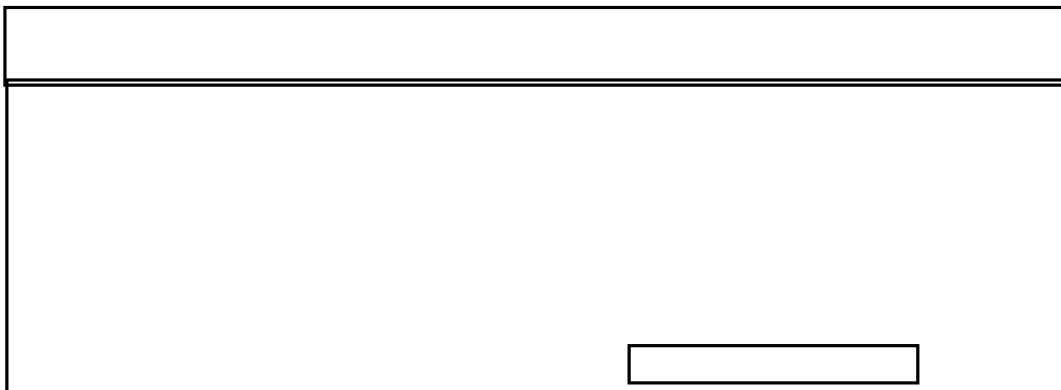
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*Ethiopia: Troops loyal to the Emperor have regained almost complete control of Addis Ababa, and the coup attempt apparently has collapsed. Loyalists have freed the crown prince and other officials who were being held in the palace. Most of the dissidents are at large in the Addis Ababa area.

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[The army reportedly has issued orders for the arrest of the ringleaders, including Bodyguard commander General Menghistou, Director of Security Workeneh, and Germami Neway, Menghistou's brother, who reportedly was the behind-the-scenes leader of the dissidents.] The Emperor, who landed in Asmara on the afternoon of 16 December, can be expected to impose severe punishment on all those involved in the coup.

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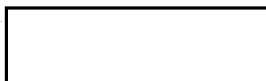
III. THE WEST

Italy: Political tensions are rising as the Christian Democrats are negotiating for allies outside the four parties supporting the government; only with such alliances will they be able to govern key cities where the four parties do not have a majority following the local elections on 6 and 7 November. The Christian Democrats are playing down the national political significance of the local collaboration with the Nenni Socialists which is urged by the government's moderate left supporters. Opposition by right-wing Christian Democrats and

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Liberals to such collaboration could build up pressures leading to the fall of Fanfani's government. [redacted]

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Ecuador: Ecuador's pro-Castro anti-US minister of government--the principal exponent of pro-bloc policies within the government--[redacted] informed Ecuadorean Communist leaders on 13 December that the cabinet had secretly decided to establish relations with the USSR. Three days earlier Foreign Minister Chiriboga had announced that Ecuador and Czechoslovakia would soon exchange diplomatic missions of legation rank. (President Velasco told Ambassador Bernbaum on 14 December that while Ecuador is willing to establish relations with the USSR, he will neither take the initiative nor yield to domestic pressures for close ties with the bloc or withdrawal from the Organization of American States. (OAS). [redacted]

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IV. SPECIAL WATCH COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

(On the basis of findings of a Special Watch Committee Meeting on 16 December 1960 concerning developments relating to Laos, the United States Intelligence Board concludes that:)

(The recent developments in Laos have undoubtedly forced the Communists to review their tactics and immediate objectives.)

(Such evidence as we have to date regarding Communist intentions is susceptible of two interpretations:)

Ca. A decision to rely on the Kong Le/Pathet Lao forces, with such increased assistance as is required in materiel and)

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(selected personnel, to prevent the Phoumi - Boun Oum forces from establishing effective control of Laos.)

(b. A decision to intervene openly with Democratic Republic of Vietnam or Chinese Communist forces.)

(The course of action "a" would not only advance Communist interests in Laos but would also allow full opportunity for attempting to isolate and discredit the US. Although the evidence better supports the adoption of course "a," open intervention under course "b" is not precluded even though such a course might involve substantial risks to the bloc.)

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LATE ITEM

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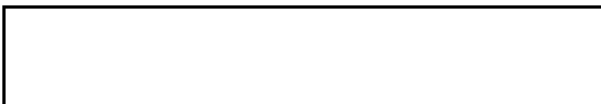
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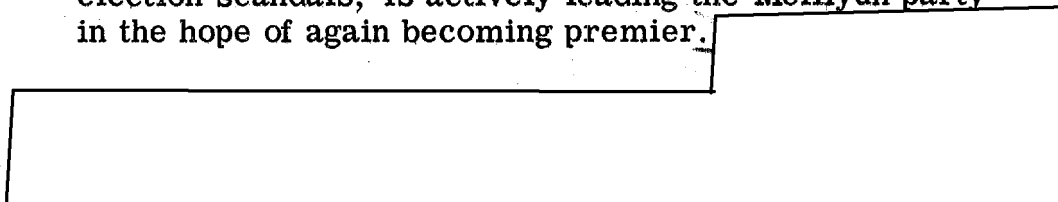
Iranian Elections Scheduled to Begin Next Week

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[The Shah] hopes to begin parliamentary elections within the next ten days. He plans to allow voters a choice between at least two contenders for each seat, but will personally select the candidates, thus ensuring a parliament responsive to his demands. The Shah claims he will not attempt to assure the victory of any particular individual or party, and he intends to order local authorities not to influence voting on behalf of their favorites. It seems unlikely that many local officials will refrain from manipulating the voting, but the Shah may hope to avoid the obvious involvement of central government officials.]

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[Premier Sharif-Emami and Interior Minister Alavi-Moqadam are urging the Shah to allow an unrestricted number of independents to stand for election. They believe that if no party wins a clear majority, their chances of retaining office will be increased. Allahyer Saleh, a prominent independent who is distrusted by the Shah for his popularity and past association with former Premier Mossadeq, apparently will be permitted to run. Former Premier Egbal, who was forced to resign last August over election scandals, is actively leading the Melliyun party in the hope of again becoming premier.]



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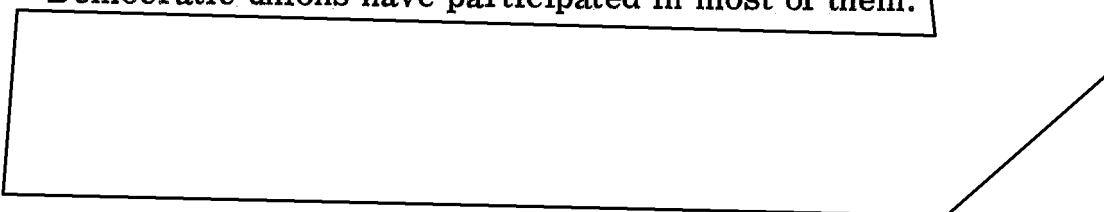
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The Christian Democrats are now negotiating for new local allies because the 6-7 November local elections in many cities, including Rome, Milan, Genoa, Turin, Venice, and Florence, failed to give a majority to either the coalition supporting the national government--Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, Republicans, and Liberals--or to the Nenni Socialists and Communists. The Christian Democratic party is pledged not to form municipal governments with the Communists or neo-Fascists, and one or the other of its various factions opposes any nationwide collaboration with the Nenni Socialists or with the Monarchists, who have too few city council seats to offer important municipal solutions on a large scale.

Christian Democratic party leaders are anxious to play down the significance of local commitments to the Nenni Socialists because of the implications such commitments would have for the national government. Apprehension on the part of the Liberal party lest the national government rely on Nenni Socialist parliamentary support led to the collapse of the Segni government in February 1960. The extent of Christian Democratic collaboration with the Socialists in municipal councils may therefore determine the life of the Fanfani coalition.

Nenni is stressing the significance of local agreements, however, in order to convince his own party's left wing that his policy of independence of the Communists is paying off. Nenni and his supporters fear that failure to achieve alliances with the Christian Democrats in important cities would hurt him vis-a-vis the Socialist left wing at the March party congress. He has been pressing for collaboration in the Sicilian regional government with the Christian Democrats, who now participate with the neo-Fascists and Monarchists.

Meanwhile the Communists are attempting to draw the Socialists back into united action by exploiting a series of strikes in the railway and industrial sectors. Additional strikes are threatened by teachers, newsmen, and shopkeepers. The strikes are based on economic issues, and not only the Communist-dominated CGIL but the largely Christian Democratic and Social Democratic unions have participated in most of them.



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